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SERBIA

CASE STUDY

Re-engaging the Public on Policy Issues

Think tank aims to show how economic trends can affect daily lives



Staff from the Center for Advanced Economic Studies (from left to right) Dusko Vasiljevic, Kori Udovicki, Olivera Andjelkovic and Vuk Djokovic pull together input for its next *Quarterly Monitor*.

“Our mission is to turn Serbia into a thriving and dynamic society and we believe we are on the right track,” said Vuk Djokovic, director of the Center for Advanced Economic Studies.

Telling Our Story
U.S. Agency for International Development
Washington, DC 20523-1000
<http://stories.usaid.gov>

Challenge

Since shifting to a democratic government and a market economy in 2000, Serbia has experienced strong economic growth, low inflation, higher wages, and other positive developments. Nonetheless, opinion polls consistently show that most citizens do not feel their quality of life has improved, nor do they have full faith in government institutions and their ability to lead Serbia towards a better future. One of the reasons identified is the lack of public information readily available from government institutions about reforms and economic trends in Serbia. Without effective outreach, it is difficult for institutions to build support for much needed, yet often unpopular, reforms and to foster confidence in government initiatives.

Initiative

USAID supports the Center for Advanced Economic Studies, a rising think tank dedicated to advancing economic research and policy analysis. The center is staffed by a team of young, enthusiastic researchers educated abroad with a broader perspective to critically analyze the current state of affairs and challenge Serbia's leaders. It launched *The Quarterly Monitor*, the first publication of economic and financial trends in Serbia, contributing significantly to informing the public about Serbia's domestic economy. The publication gathers statistical data and provides objective and professional analysis and projections of future economic trends. It plays an important role in improving the government's ability to analyze economic trends and to formulate macroeconomic policies while, at the same time, it helps decision makers to communicate the impact of their policies by demonstrating the results to the public.

Results

With USAID's help, the center has contributed to a more intensive and higher quality public discussion on macroeconomic policy in Serbia. Encouraging clearer articulation of the political/democratic process and the re-connection of the political process to broad public interests helps citizens to become more informed and more involved in the decisions that affect their lives.